A LETTER TO A Perſon of Honour IN LONDON,

From an Old CAVALIER in *YORKSHIRE*, concerning the

Papiſts.

H. M.

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A LETTER TO A *PERSON of HONOUR* IN LONDON.

From an Old Cavalier in *Yorkshire.*

SIR,

HAd you told me of the late storm of Thunder and Lightning that kill'd a Shepherd or the wonderful inundation of waters, that endanger'd a little Child, you had not fri hted me half so much, as this new and unexpected Alarum against the *Papists*: You tell me *His Majesty* (upon the Petition of those who were not like to be denyed) has banished all their Priests: You tell me a Bill has been read in the House of Commons and is committed, to renew against

the Layity all the former penal Lawes, and adde more, even to the taking away their Children, &c.

Why, what evil have they done? they fought daily with us in the field, and none laid hands on them but the Kingdoms enemies; they kill'd indeed, in a just and honourable War, some that call'd themselves *Saints*, but none but such as we call *Rebels*. Whence then should all this anger come? 'tis not from jealousie, nor interest, nor policy, nor all these together; but from some strange unhappy conjuncture, which I know not how to name; and therefore without insisting on an event so wholly unlike the causes that were laid for it, I shall seldom look backwards to what the *Papists* have done and suffer in these late calamities; a thing so evident, it need not be mentioned, nor can be denyed; but chiefly consider what they now are in reference to hereafter. I see the noise of their complaints is not heard in the streets, but generally they take their mischances with silence; which as I esteem for a generous and manly vertue where e're I find it, so I cannot but freely expresse to you my thoughts in so singular and pressing an occasion.

We fear, say you, *the growth of Popery*, and to that fear you ascribe the proceeding against the *Papists*; but must we therefore absolutely ruine them? Is there no difference betwixt checking a Tree that is spread not too far, and utterly extirpating it root and branch? Is it not enough to see them in a shade of the private life, and deny them the fruitful showers of rich Offices, but we must suck the sap out of their hearts, and leave them to wither away by degrees, and dye?

Besides, when the grounds of such a suspition are thorowly examined, they will certainly be found too weak to sustain so heavy a severity: For, to omit the pious Arguments, That we are secure enough by the nature of our Cause, and the protection of our God; we have sensible and humane Reasons, (which many sooner believe) deriv'd from plain and evident experience.

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Are not the *Papists* tolerated in divers parts of *Germany*, where the *Reformation* is Master? and yet they grow not? Is not the *Reformation* it self, which has so many advantages over *Popery*, tolerated in *France*, and yet it grows not? In *Holland*, in *Switzerland*, and generally in all Countries where they live mingled together, they stand as it were at a certain mark, and seldom overflow; but like the Sea, if they gain on one side, they lose as much on another.

I know what foyl your Countrey is made of, but as I think we love our Religion as well as our Neighbours, so I'm confident our Reformation is so much more rational then *Theirs*, that we have far lesse cause to apprehend any change or defection than they. If they fear it not in their Laws, they find it not in their practices; why should we alone enter into unnecessary suspitions, to the discredit both of our Religion, while we declare by our proceedings that it needs the prop of force to support it; and of our Policy, while by chasing some from home, and discouraging others abroad, we diminish the wealth and prosperity of our Country. Let us open our eyes, and look on the wisest of our Neighbours, and see how moderately they proceed in matters of Conscience, and how notably they thrive and improve by their moderation.

Possibly at first, when Liberty is newly given, some number, who now conceal, may discover themselves; but after the first Run, the rest will stand firm and be more unchangeable, and this, when all's considered, may prove the safer course, to separate such as dissemble from among the cordial Professors: However, 'tis time enough to prevent the increase, when we see the increase grow really dangerous.

In the present state of our affairs, the *Roman Catholicks* seem so far from dangerous, that they rather are particularly useful. The Nation we see is divided into four Parties, *Protestant*, *Roman Catholick*, *Presbyterian* and *Fanatick*. And were there now a War to begin, we might easily guess which of these four would likelyest agree, by remembring which of them agreed in the War that's ended. If we think the

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Roman Catholicks would again assist the right way, why do we so terrible discourage them? If we beleive them loyal (as we have found them by the best Argument, *Experience*) why should we so diminish them, that we make them inconsiderable? Were it not more suitable to our true interest, so far to suffer them as they are necessary to counterballance one sort of our discontented Neighbours, and then we should easilier secure our selves against the other? Can we forget a Trick so lately passed upon us? First, they cried out against the *Papists*, as if they were Traytors, till they had disabled them; Then, against the *Protestants*, as if they were *Papists*, till they had mastered them: Then, against every one that would not rebel, till they had ruin'd all.

'Twas a shrewd word, and very true, in our Country, of him that said, I have observ'd few of the *fighting Cavaliers* speak against the *Papists*. I'm sure we (of my Noble Lord of *Newcastles* Army) know well enough their constant Fidelity; we fought and fell together, we freely ventured our lives for one another, and in all occasions, that might any way conduce to our Princes service, we perfectly agreed, and little thought, if it had pleased God to have given us success, to exclude them wholly from sharing in the benefit.

Were we all one in Religion, 'twere certainly best for peace; but if such Union be once become impossible, then let the Master-Religion be establisht; and for the Rest, the more sorts of them there are, the more safely they are govern'd: Should now the *Papist* and *Fanatick* be suppress, the Civil Interest would be more endanger'd, unless we overcom the *Presbyterian* too, which will be a harder task, when by the disbanding of others, they are grown more numerous. Two Factions in a Common-wealth are desperately dangerous, but twenty not at all; unless they conspire into Two, which is not so easily done, as they who originally are no more. However, that evidently is the dangerous number, since none else is dangerous till they come to that.

If the present *Papists* be too few to be fear'd, what need we punish those who now are *Papists*, lest they should grow here-

hereafter ſo many as to be fear'd? Is it not enough to lay penalties on ſuch as ſhall turn to them for the future? If to preſerve the peace be our intention, and that cannot be moleſted by thoſe of the Roman communion, as now it ſtands, let us but ſhut the door that no more enter in, and we are ſafe, without pulling down the Houſe on the heads of thoſe that are there already.

I cannot deny but I'm thus far Popiſhly affected, that I willingly converſe with a Papiſt, if he be a *Cavalier*, and heartily love a Cavalier, though he be a Papiſt: this is my character, and I'm not a jot aſham'd to own it. Shew me a *Papiſt* that took the *Covenant*; or fought againſt the King, and I'le hate him worſe then a *Presbyterian*, ſo much care I for their Religion: but when I find many of them civil and ingenious, and well-bread perſons, why ſhould I decline their Company? When I find all of them true, and earneſt, and conſtant Cavaliers, why ſhould I hate their Perſons? All this I ſee may eaſily be done, without either approving their Religion, or diminiſhing my own: Eſpecially ſince the moſt eminent Divines of *England* allow the Church of *Rome* to be a true Church, from whence they acknowledge to derive their *Orders*; wherein they agree that both ſalvation may be had, and all fundamentals are profeſt; which I believe they will not ſay of any other Diſſenters in this Nation; I'me ſure, if they ſay it, they cannot maintain it, till they have anſwered this Argument.

No true Church without true Paſtors: No true Paſtors without true Ordination: No true Ordination without true Biſhops: Therefore, where there are no Biſhops, there's neither Ordination, nor Paſtors, nor Church.

Thus clearly to my eye, *Proteſtants* differ from *Presbyterians* and the reſt, not in circumſtantials onely, but in eſſentials; they differ as Church and no Church; which is a far grater diſtance then between *Proteſtant* and *Papiſt*. This ſingle conſideration has often made me wonder why we ſhould ſo violently perſecute the *Papiſt* with the uncouth names of *Idolatrous* and *Antichriſtian*; and, which is worſe, with the churliſh actions of *Sequeſtration* and *Death*, barg-

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ing and quartering them only for taking Orders from the same Church from whence we derive our own? And all this while we kindly call our other Neighbours Brethren, and pray for our Sister-Churches beyond the Seas; who yet are so far from having *One* Mother with us, that our selves say they have *None* at all?

Are then the *Calvinists* no Church? are all the *Reformers* in *France*, *Germany*, *Holland*, and even *Geneva* it self, no Church? I refer you to the Argument, the Conclusion perhaps may be unwelcom; but the Premises, I doubt are unavoidable. If no Governors, there can be no Governed, and if neither of Those, there can be no Community, whether we speak of spiritual or civil Communities. Only sometimes when we would reckon up our numbers to cróss-bite the *Papists*, (who for the same purpose will count the *Greeks* their Brethren) we let all sorts of *Reformers* passe the Muster for *Protestants*; a kind of *pia fraus* to sustain reputation, and bear up the hearts of the People, and have somwhat to say to an Adversary.

Whether upon this Reason, or some other, I know not, but I observe our gravest Preachers, and our learnedst Writers generally affirm, that We punish the *Papists* not for *Religion*, but for *Treason*. Sure we must not mean their *Religion* is *Treason*, for then we plainly contradict our selves; while we say we punish them for *Treason*, not *Religion*, that the same time we make them but two Names for one Thing.

What is then their Treason? Either their Actions; and let all that are guilty dye without mercy, without so much as the least syllable of benefit by the Act of Oblivion; let them all be hang'd, and drawn, and quarter'd, and none be found to pity them; onely let our Justice not be blind, and punish the Innocent with the Criminal; but the Soul that sins, let that dye. Or else their Opinions are Treasonable: And then let the Opinions be first singled out, and either publickly renounc't, or the Maintainers proceeded against with what penalty you please. But, if their Religion (that is, their Faith, not their Opinions) be clear from the charge of Treason,

let

let us honestly stand to our Principles, and no longer, upon that account, punish them as Traitors.

Well, though they now have approved themselves good Subjects, yet time has been when they were not so. But shall we not cease to punish, when they cease to deserve it? Shall we not take off their Fetters when they do well, as willingly as we laid them on when they did ill? Nay, shall we charge them with new and heavier chains now they have given us such evidence of their constant Loyalty? even *Bedlams* themselves are set at liberty, when we see they are returned to their wits. We know all have suffered long for the crimes of a few; Why may they not hope as well to be indulged now for the Loyalty of many. Time too has been, when others were no good Subjects, and that within the memory even of young men; but the gracious Clemency of *His Majesty* has buried all in *Oblivion*; and may all treasonous Rebellions, of what Sect or Faction soever, be eternally buried, and never rise again to molest us, either in our duty to our *King*, or charity to one another.

But let the Lovers of Peace do what they can, some will be still delighting to rub over old sores: and immediately they fall upon the *Gunpowder-Treason*, and the *Spanish Invasion:* As for the last, if we look into our own Histories, we shall see, our Nation had disoblig'd the *Spaniard* by a long course of sharp unkindnesses, of which he desiring to be avenged, and finding no handsomer pretence than that of relieving the oppressed for Religion, he took it, and brought it along with him. But in all the [illegible] the crime of the *English Papists*? Do not our own Historians say, they *were ready with their service like the Englishmen, and desired to take their fortune with the common Soldiers*? Do not our Authors expressly note that the *Spaniards indeed perswaded themselves they should be seconded by the English Roman Catholicks, but were utterly deceived*? The truth is, a few English Fugitives beyond Sea were guilty, and all at home were punish'd: and for the other, it was indeed the most devilish and most foolish Plot that ever was devis'd. But how many were guilty? Read the Proclamations immediately upon the

Diſcovery, and you'l find the number of their chief Contrivers to be about a dozen, and all the forces they could levy, ſay our Hiſtories, were not full fourſcore. Now if we reflect on the multitude of *Roman Catholicks* who faithfully ſerv'd our *Gracious King*, and his *Royal Father*, we ſhall eaſily ſee how far more apt they are to adhere to their Prince, then rebel againſt him. Read then the death even of thoſe few deſperate men, and you'l find they heartily repented, at leaſt, moſt of them: Read all their Hiſtory, the fouleſt that ever that Party was concern'd in, and I am confident, though you'l continue your juſt indignation againſt thoſe who were Traytors, yet your anger will be allay'd towards the reſt that were Innocent; at leaſt, all Revenge will be ſatisfied, when you have conſidered how long, and how univerſally that one crime of a few deſperate men has been puniſht. Miſtake me not, I would not have ſo great a Crime forgotten, but I think it belongs to Chriſtian charity, that the greateſt ſhould at laſt be forgiven. Can there be imagined a more deteſtable Treaſon then that againſt our late gracious Sovereign, in which, though Juſtice take care to conſerve the memory, yet mercy already has pardoned the Offenders.

And here I cannot but remember ſome paſſages among us, that keep alive our animoſities, and certainly have more of humour in them, then ingenuity. We call the *Papiſts Ignorant*, and yet fear their *Subtilty*: We cry out of the *Foggy Myſts*, and *Egyptian darkneſs* of *Popery*, and at the ſame time, rail againſt their *Prieſts and Jeſuits*, as *Crafty Foxes*, that deſtroy the Vineyard of the *Goſpel*. If they write openly, we ſay, they grow inſolent: If privately, they ſeek to ſurpriſe us: If they *ſay* nothing at all, we ſuſpect they are plotting to *do* the more. Even ſince the late Proclamation for baniſhing Prieſts, a Friend of mine told me he heard this captious *Dilemma* made uſe of. *If* many go away, then there were many here, and it was time to look to them: If few, then the more are left behind, and ſtill we muſt have a care of them: If they complain they are afflicted, we ſay, they are Male-contents; if they take all with patience, we ſay they are well enough now, if they can be contented

tented. Nay, ſo croſſly we interpret one another, that, to my amazement, I have heard ſome zealous Diſcourſers affirm, the *Papiſts* were guilty of all our Diviſions in Religion; becauſe they were ſtriving ſtill to ſhew that our Principles lead to Diviſion. Which if it be true, is no Crime in them at all; If falſe, let us labour to diſprove it; they who diſcover the conſequences of inconvenient Maximes, are not too blame: but they who ſet up thoſe *Maximes*. Therefore methinks our better play in this point is, firſt to prove the *Papiſts* in an errour, and then the union and unchangeableneſſe they ſo much boaſt of, will be the greateſt Objection againſt them; ſince ſuch union makes an errour apt to deceive; and ſuch fixedneſs makes it impoſſible to be mended: Whereas our variety has this advantage, that ſome may be in the right, while others are in the wrong; and if to day we miſtake, to morrow we may correct it.

Other accuſations we too haſtily impoſe on them, which none but Fools and Bedlams would be guilty of: As, that whoever is in power and prevails and rules, they ſtill oppoſe him; And therefore, at firſt they were againſt the all-commanding-long-half-lower-Houſe; then againſt *Oliver*: then againſt the *Rump*: Now, againſt the *King*: Thus ſome among us ſtill ſeek to make it be believed, the *Papiſts* are alwayes againſt the governing Powers, onely that the governing Powers may be alwayes againſt them. Sure, if all be true we ſay of them, our Engliſh *Papiſts* are a ſtrange race of people, every kinde of *Reformer* ſuſpects them to make Plots and Conſpiracies with his particular Adverſary againſt him. In the beginning of the late times, they were charged to conſpire with the *Proteſtants* againſt the *Presbyterians*: In the midſt of theſe miſeries, they were accuſed to conſpire with the *Presbyterian* againſt the *Fanaticks*: Now, in the end, ſome are found to murmur up and down, that they conſpire with the *Presbyterians* and *Fanaticks* too, againſt the Church of *England*. All, I can ſay to this caſe is, either we miſtake them, or they are mad men, and have no more wit then a weather-cock, that where e're the wind is, ſtill turns his face directly againſt it.

Though in all theſe Inſtances, I think, they are extreamly miſunderſtood: yet is there one wherein I am not ſatisfied my ſelf; and that is, their acknowledging a Foreign Authority in prejudice of our *Kings Supremacy*. And at firſt ſight I eaſily diſcern, the Controverſie has, for a long time, been ſomwhat miſtaken, at leaſt miſexpreſt. The Queſtion, I conceive, is not whether the Supremacy in matters purely Spiritual be in the *King*, or the *Pope*: but, whether in the *Arch-Biſhop* of *Canterbury*, or the Pope: I ſhall onely looſen the knot a little, and then 'twill unty it ſelf. We know our graver and more learned Divines, diſtinguiſh between the inward power of the Keyes, and the outward juriſdiction by temporal penalties: This they aſsign to the King, in all Cauſes, and over all Perſons: That they reſerve to the Clergy, as neither deriv'd from the Civil Magiſtrate, nor dependant on Him. And thus much the *Papiſts*, unleſſe I'm miſinform'd, are ready to profeſs, onely they faſten the top-link of the pure-Spiritual chain to the Chair of *Rome*, and not to that of *Canterbury*. Which of theſe waies is the more convenient, I cannot judge; but plainly ſee, if one be inconſiſtent with Monarchy, the other is: And if a Subject may be, in any conſideration, *Supream*, without derogating from his Prince, a Stranger may be ſo too. Think on it well, and inſtruct me, if I erre.

But you will Reply, if the Moderate on both ſides ſo nearly agree in ſenſe concerning the Kings Eccleſiaſtical Authority, why do the *Papiſts* refuſe the Oath of Supremacy, and the *Proteſtants* admit it? ſhall I tell you freely my thought? I believe, if the *Proteſtants* underſtood that Oath as it ſounds, they would never take it, for it gives the King more then they mean; and if the Papiſt could underſtand it to ſound no more then the Proteſtants mean, they would never refuſe it. How then ſhall this difference be reconciled? Either let both ſides be underſtood to mean as they ſpeak, and then neither of them will take it; or to ſpeak as they mean, and then neither of them will refuſe it. The remedy, if heartily deſired, is eaſie: There needs no more but fairly to frame the Words according to the ſenſe:

I mean all this while, as far as concerns the *Royal Supremacy* in Eccleſiaſtical affairs, not intermedling with the pure Spiritual part, which I leave to the diſcuſſion of pure Spiritual Perſons.

And indeed, the Oath it ſelf aims at no more then to aſſert theſe two Points; that the Supream power in Spirituals belongs to the King; and that none of That Power belongs to any Forreigner, as is clear by the Words of the Oath, nor to any other, as may clearly be infer'd from the Form of Submiſſion made 35. *Eliz.* 1. where the Submitter is requir'd to *teſtifie in his Conſcience, that, No other Perſon hath, or ought to have any Power or Authority over his Majeſty:* Which I underſtand in matters belonging to the Church, for thoſe were the Caſes provided for by that Act.

I had almoſt forgot a principal conſideration. The *Papiſts*, 'tis ſaid ſolicited his *Sacred Majeſty* to publiſh the late *Declaration* for tender Conſciences; and did none ſolicit but they? Or muſt it be counted ſo unpardonable a Crime for Subjects to beg of their King the Performance of his Royal Word? At leaſt thus much we muſt confeſſe in excuſe of the *Papiſts*, they needed moſt their Princes Indulgence, becauſe the Lawes were ſevereſt againſt them: They deſerv'd it beſt, becauſe, of all that needed it, they were moſt faithful to him. They moved in the fitteſt time, after the Common *Uniformity* was Enacted, and before the Services they had done were forgotten? Yet for all this the general mercy was far more ſparingly expreſt to them, then to any of the reſt. Sullen *Presbyterian*, that rather will ſtarve himſelf, then endure a *Papiſt* to have a morſel of bread!

'Tis true, ſome withdrew themſelves from the publick Service upon that *Declaration*: But, was there one *Papiſt* among them? Why muſt the *Papiſt* and none but he be whipt; when the *Puritan*, and none but he playes Truant? for the *Papiſt* went to another School before, and therefore though he ſtill be abſent from ours, yet cannot he properly be ſaid to play Truant. Nor can the endeavour of procuring this *Declaration* be ſuſpected (as our faſhion is) for a *Popiſh-plot*, and that all the *Papiſts* conſpired in it together; when I have

have Reaſons to be extreamly confident few knew of it till 'twas cry'd in the ſtreets. I know 'tis eaſie to be jealous but every one knows 'tis uncharitable too; unleſſe we have a cauſe; we, that is, ſome peeviſh ſpirits among us, ſay, that all along the late times, their *Prieſts* and *Jeſuites* were in the enemies army, and (under the diſguiſes of *Taylors* and *Weavers*,) preach'd them into rebellion: But if never any one of theſe were diſcover'd, on what ground do we ſay they were there? and if they were diſcover'd, by what favour were they protected againſt the Law? ſure nothing can be aid why they were not found *guilty*, but that they could not be *found*.

But 'tis time to conclude; for my part, let others do as they pleaſe, I'le ſtrive to love my own Religion, without hating another mans; much leſſe will I hate another man for his Religion. I conceive him in an errour, and he thinks ſo of me; I have ſome marks of being in the right, and he believes he has as many as I: I reade the Bible, and ſo does he: And after all, our differences continue: What ſhall we do, but live peaceably together, till it pleaſe God to clear the truth among us; Onely this advantage I cannot deny to the Papiſts, that in temporal reſpects they are incomparably more tolerable, then either *Presbyterian* or *Fanatick*; In ſpiritual, though we charge them all with Errours, yet thoſe of the Papiſts conſiſts with the Being of our Church, the other deſtroy it. Excuſe this long Letter, and believe me ever,

SIR,

York, 13 *May*,
1663.

Your moſt humble and obliged Servant,
H. M.

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